

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 L-03 H-03

CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

LAB-06 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01

/183 W

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R 281757Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9742

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EFIN, FR, BE

SUBJECT: CONTINUED BELGIAN DISCONTENT OVER FLOATING OF FRENCH
FRANC

REF: BRUSSELS 365

1. IN CONVERSATION ON JANUARY 25, 1974, COVERING A VARIETY
OF SUBJECTS, JACQUES VAN YPERSELE (SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE
LAST TWO BELGIAN FINANCE MINISTERS) AGAIN DEPLORED FRENCH
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DECISION TO FLOAT FRANC. IN HIS VIEW THERE WAS NO REAL

NECESSITY FOR FLOAT AND THAT DECISION HAD COME AS A SURPRISE BOTH TO BELGIANS AND TO THE FRG. THE FRENCH HAD, FOR EXAMPLE, GIVEN NO WARNING IN ROME DURING C-20 MEETING.

2. MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, DURING "DEEP BACKGROUND" PRESS BRIEFING SAME EVENING, FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL DAVIGNON SAID BELGIUM HAD BEEN LEFT "SPEECHLESS" BY BOTH THE FRENCH DECISION AND THE MILD REACTION IT HAD PROVOKED IN OTHER CAPITALS. DAVIGNON WAS ALSO HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ALLEGED COMPLACENT ATTITUDE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND THE COMMISSION.

3. HE THOUGHT THIS PARTICULARLY STRIKING SINCE THE FRENCH FINANCE MINISTER HAD ADMITTED THAT "THE MEASURES WERE TAKEN WITHOUT, AND OUTSIDE OF, ANY CRISIS". ACCORDING TO DAVIGNON SUCH ACTION COULD NOT BE TOLERATED WITHIN THE EC AND THE FRENCH MUST BE BROUGHT TO "TRIAL" BEFORE THE COMMUNITY. DAVIGNON HELD OUT SLIM HOPE FOR REGIONAL FUND WHICH WAS INTEGRAL PART OF EMU, IF EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY WERE FREE TO GO ITS WAY WHENEVER ITS SELFISH INTERESTS CAME IN THE WAY OF ITS COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES.

4. DAVIGNON SAID BELGIUM HAS DECIDED, THEREFORE, TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM ON THE JANUARY 30 COUNCIL AGENDA: "THE SITUATION ON THE COMMUNITY AFTER THE FRENCH DECISION--A STATEMENT BY THE BELGIAN DELEGATION." NO SUPPORT HAS BEEN SOUGHT FOR THE BELGIAN POSITION, BUT BELGIUM WAS PREPARED TO STAND ALONE. STRAUSSZ-HUPE

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